



**Homeland
Security**

Privacy Office, Mail Stop 0655

August 2, 2019

SENT BY ELECTRONIC MAIL TO: foia@americanoversight.org

Austin R. Evers
Executive Director
American Oversight
1030 15th Street, NW
Suite B255
Washington, DC 20005

Re: 2019-HQFO-00235

Dear Mr. Evers:

This is the electronic final response to your Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), dated December 14, 2018, and received by this office on December 18, 2018. You are seeking information regarding all talking points prepared by DHS concerning (1) the pipe bombs mailed to prominent individuals including Democratic officials and former officials, in October 2018, and/or (2) the October 27, 2018 mass shooting attack at the Tree of Life Congregation Synagogue in Pittsburgh.

:A search of the Office of the Executive Secretariat for documents responsive to your request produced a total of 8 pages. Of those pages, I have determined that 7 pages of the records are releasable in their entirety and 1 page is partially releasable pursuant to Title 5 U.S.C. § 552: (b)(6), FOIA Exemption 6.

FOIA Exemption 6 exempts from disclosure personnel or medical files and similar files the release of which would cause a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy. This requires a balancing of the public's right to disclosure against the individual's right to privacy. The privacy interests of the individuals in the records you have requested outweigh any minimal public interest in disclosure of the information. Any private interest you may have in that information does not factor into the aforementioned balancing test.

You have a right to appeal the above withholding determination. Should you wish to do so, you must send your appeal and a copy of this letter, within 90 days of the date of this letter, to: Privacy Office, Attn: FOIA Appeals, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 245 Murray Lane, SW, Mail Stop 0655, Washington, D.C. 20528-0655, following the procedures outlined in the DHS FOIA regulations at 6 C.F.R. Part 5 § 5.8. Your envelope and letter should be marked

“FOIA Appeal.” Copies of the FOIA and DHS FOIA regulations are available at www.dhs.gov/foia.

Provisions of FOIA allow DHS to charge for processing fees, up to \$25, unless you seek a waiver of fees. In this instance, because the cost is below the \$25 minimum, there is no charge.

If you need any further assistance or would like to discuss any aspect of your request, please contact the analyst below who processed your request and refer to **2019-HQFO-00235**. You may send an e-mail to foia@hq.dhs.gov, call 202-343-1743 or toll free 1-866-431-0486, or you may contact our FOIA Public Liaison in the same manner. Additionally, you have a right to seek dispute resolution services from the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS) which mediates disputes between FOIA requesters and Federal agencies as a non-exclusive alternative to litigation. If you are requesting access to your own records (which is considered a Privacy Act request), you should know that OGIS does not have the authority to handle requests made under the Privacy Act of 1974. You may contact OGIS as follows: Office of Government Information Services, National Archives and Records Administration, 8601 Adelphi Road-OGIS, College Park, Maryland 20740-6001, e-mail at ogis@nara.gov; telephone at 202-741-5770; toll free at 1-877-684-6448; or facsimile at 202-741-5769.

Sincerely,

Maura Busch

Maura Busch
FOIA Program Specialist

Enclosure(s): Responsive Documents, 8 pages

CESAR SAYOC -- PACKAGE BOMB INVESTIGATION

Top Line Points:

- Between October 22 to November 2, 2018, a total of sixteen packages containing pipe bombs were received by a variety of politicians, prominent political and public figures, and news organizations perceived to be associated with or supportive of the Democratic Party.
- Investigation, based largely on forensic evidence and tracing of the packages through the U.S. Postal Service system, developed a U.S. citizen, Cesar Sayoc, as a suspect.
- Sayoc was arrested on October 26, 2018, by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the Miami Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF), and remains in custody pending trial for a 30-count indictment.

Initial Incident:

- On October 22, 2018, a package addressed to Democratic Party donor George Soros was received at his residence in New York containing an improvised explosive device (IED).
- The IED consisted of a PVC pipe with additional components and a picture of Soros with a red "X" through it. The package bore a return address of Florida Congresswoman Debbie Wasserman-Schultz.
- Several similar packages were received nationwide in the days that followed. The FBI and the JTTF, including USSS Task Force Officers, initiated a process by which the FBI would take custody of the packages and then transport them to the FBI Explosive Unit at Quantico, VA, for testing and analysis.
- The following sixteen packages were addressed to:
 - Former First Lady Hillary Clinton, USSS protectee (residence)
 - Former President Barack Obama, USSS protectee (post office box)
 - Former Vice President Joseph Biden, former USSS protectee (two packages mailed; one addressed to the Biden residence, one addressed to an assisted living facility)
 - Congresswoman Maxine Waters (two packages mailed, one addressed to the U.S. Capitol, one addressed to Los Angeles, CA office)
 - George Soros, billionaire philanthropist and Democratic Party donor (residence)
 - John Brennan, former CIA Director (Time Warner/CNN offices, NYC)
 - Eric Holder, former U.S. Attorney General (incorrectly identified residence)
 - Robert DeNiro, actor (Tribeca Grill, NYC)
 - Senator Cory Booker (Camden, NJ office)
 - James Clapper, former DNI (Time Warner/CNN offices, NYC)
 - Senator Kamala Harris (Sacramento, CA office)
 - CNN, (CNN Headquarters Atlanta, GA)
 - Thomas Steyer, Democratic Party donor (residence; two packages received)
- The National Explosives Task Force described the IEDs as all containing similar components, including a small digital clock, an improvised hot bridge wire, pyrotechnic powder, button batteries, and PVC piping.

JTTF Investigation:

- FBI Miami and the U.S. Postal Inspection Service were able to determine that the majority of the packages were sourced from a mail facility located in Opa-locka, Florida.

- Forensic analysis conducted by the FBI developed DNA samples, including latent fingerprints, taken from the envelopes and IEDs.
- The DNA resolved to subject Cesar Sayoc.
- Searches of Sayoc's belongings subsequent to his arrest revealed right-wing political propaganda, potential bomb-making paraphernalia, printed material on possible intended victims, and various electronic media seized for forensic exploitation. Additional items located in the search included literature about President Trump and a large amount of Trump-branded clothing.
- Based on the investigation, the FBI developed a list of 442 public and political figures and institutions to receive a "Duty to Warn" notification, which is a notice to individuals indicating their potential as additional targets.

Subsequent Actions:

- On October 26, 2018, Sayoc was arrested by the Miami JTTF without incident. USSS Miami JTTF task force officers participated in the arrest. A Quarles interview (public safety interview not subject to Miranda warning requirements) was conducted prior to Sayoc being Mirandized. Sayoc did not acknowledge responsibility for the packages and invoked his Fifth Amendment rights prior to terminating the interview.
- On November 15, 2018, Sayoc was arraigned in the Southern District of New York and pled not guilty to a 30 count indictment. The indictment alleges:
 - 5 counts of 18 USC 2332a(a)(2) – Use of a Weapon of Mass Destruction
 - 5 counts of 18 USC 875(c) – Threatening Interstate Communications
 - 5 counts of 18 USC 1716(j)(2) – Illegal Mailing of Explosives
 - 5 counts of 18 USC 844(h) – Use of Explosives to Commit a Felony
 - 5 counts of 18 USC 844(d) – Interstate Transportation and Receipt of Explosives
 - 5 counts of 18 USC 924(c)(1)(A) and (B) – Use of a Destructive Device During and in Furtherance of a Crime of Violence
- If convicted of all charges, Sayoc could face a sentence of life imprisonment.
- Sayoc remains in custody until his jury trial, scheduled to begin on July 15, 2019. A pretrial conference is scheduled for February 7, 2019.

Talking Points

General

- First, I would like to express my condolences to everyone impacted by the unfortunate events today.
- We face a very dynamic threat environment that has resulted in too many incidents across the country in areas we should feel safest in, including religious facilities.
- I want to assure the American people the Administration is committed to maintaining our security and ensuring the integrity of the American way of life.
- At the Department of Homeland Security, this is the core of our mission.
- We have thousands of people working every day to keep us safe through a broad range of programs that support the public and private sectors in reducing risks, including those associated with active shooter events.
- These programs focus on training and capacity building, intelligence and information sharing, and community awareness.

Direct Engagement with the Jewish Community

- We have had a working relationship with our partners within the Jewish Community for over 13 years.
- We provide resources that inform on behavioral indicators, potential attack methods, how to develop an emergency action plan, actions that may be taken during an incident, and how to quickly and effectively recover from an incident.
- Specific engagement includes:
 - Engagements
 - Specifically relating to Pittsburgh, the PSA from the Pittsburgh District has conducted many activities related to active shooter preparedness with Jewish facilities in the area, such as:
 - A security site visit to the Tree of Life Synagogue (site involved in today's incident) was conducted on 3/27/2018 along with local partners. Prior to this latest visit, PSA (b)(6) conducted a security visit there on 4/1/2015.
 - In the last three years, PSA (b)(6) has conducted site security visits at 19 Jewish sites in the Pittsburgh area.
 - PSA (b)(6) attended a Jewish Community Center Active Shooter Drill 1/25/2018, conducted Active Shooter Training for the Jewish Federation of Pittsburgh on 6/17/2015, and has been going on joint visits to Jewish facilities with the Federation's Director of Jewish Community Security.
 - An Active Shooter Workshop was conducted in Pittsburgh, PA on 01 July 2016.
 - Workshops
 - The Jewish Community Center of San Francisco in September 2015; Weinstein Jewish Community Center in Richmond, VA in December 2016; Katz Jewish Community Center in Cherry Hill, NJ in February 2017; Greater Miami Jewish Foundation in March 2017; Jewish Community Center of Greater Columbus in

March 2017; Greater Miami Jewish Federations Council Chambers, Miami, FL, in April 2017; Greater Miami Jewish Federations Council Chambers, Wilmington, NC, in April 2017; and Camden Interfaith, Camden, NJ, in September 2014.

- Other workshops in the Pittsburgh area included those on 1 July 2016 and 30 April 2013 with a broad set of stakeholders.

- Products

- In preparation for the High Holidays in 2018, the Department partnered with the Secure Community Network to co-brand a series of fact sheets with information on threats and mitigating measures relating to active shooter, vehicle ramming, and mass gathering.

- Exercises:

- Jewish Federation of Cleveland Full Scale Exercise: Conducted in April 2016, and focused on active shooter incidents within the community. Enhanced preparedness and strengthened interoperability among participating organizations.
- National Jewish Executive Leadership Tabletop Exercises: Conducted in July 2015, and focused on enhancing the ability of the American Jewish community to coordinate security and incident-response efforts. Enhanced the ability to establish coordinated messaging following an emergent threat with nationwide implications.
- Greater Boston Multi-Faith Crisis Management Workshop: Conducted in June 2015, and focused on better understanding the threats and concerns facing faith-based communities across Boston. Enhanced information sharing, partnership development, and risk mitigation.
- We are currently working closely on planning for a tabletop exercise in early April 2019, which will be focused on pre-incident and incident-information sharing, response procedures, recovery practices, and business continuity protocols. In this dynamic threat environment, it is imperative that the Department and its strongest partners, such as SCN, continue collaborating on vital initiatives such as this exercise to more effectively secure our communities and implement the necessary measures to mitigate the impacts of a potential attack.

- Information Sharing and Training:

- Protective Security Advisors (PSAs) maintain consistent reach out to the executive directors of the Jewish Community Center (JCC) Association of North America. The executive directors represent more than 150 community-based Jewish federations around the United States, which provide educational, cultural, social, recreational, and Jewish identity-building programs.
- In 2017, in response to threats against Jewish Community Centers, Protective Security Advisors, in coordination with the Secure Community Network, conducted outreach to executive directors of the JCC Association of North America.

- The executive directors represent more than 150 community-based Jewish federations around the United States that provide educational, cultural, social, recreational, and Jewish identity-building programs.
- PSAs provided facility vulnerability assessments; and assistance with active shooter preparedness, bombing prevention training and guidance, tabletop exercises, protective measures, guides, and other tools to strengthen security at the JCCs. Additionally, the Office for Bombing Prevention and the DHS Office of Intelligence and Analysis conducted a webinar with 765 SCN members.
- Bombing Prevention Training
 - The Department's Office for Bombing Prevention (OBP) led two *Introduction to Bomb Threat Management* awareness webinars in January and March 2017 to SCN members. During the webinars, which had over 900 participants, NPPD's OBP provided an overview of Bomb Threat Management guidance and discussed additional resources available, including NPPD OBP's Bomb Threat Management Planning course.
- Hometown Security Initiative
 - Over the past five years, PSAs conducted approximately 280 Hometown Security Initiative activities with JCCs, including:
 - 186 Hometown Security Initiative Assist Visits
 - 44 Security Surveys
 - 8 Infrastructure Visualization Platform Imagery Captures
- We remain steadfast in our commitment to secure the American people, and we will continue to do everything we can to mitigate these incidents.

Background Information

- NPPD has a 13+ year, close collaborative working relationship with the Secure Community Network (SCN). SCN is a non-profit organization founded in 2004 to serve the American Jewish community on matters relating to communal safety, security, and all-hazards preparedness and response.
- SCN operates under the leadership of the Jewish Federations of North America and the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations.
- SCN maintains a full-time threat and information-sharing center to monitor and report on threats and security events impacting the American Jewish community.
- SCN leverages government and private sector resources to better protect and secure communities, and ensures that the security concerns of communities continue to remain a top focus of the intelligence, homeland security, and law enforcement agencies.
- NPPD's engagement includes:
 - Threat information sharing – Jewish Community Centers and U.S. Jewish community response to domestic and international events and incidents;
 - Training on a range of topics including active shooter, bombing prevention, and surveillance detection;
 - Facility protective measures and security/vulnerability assessments; and,
 - Table top exercises.
- SCN is the only faith-based organization that has official participation in the DHS “See Something, Say Something” campaign/program.
- The Jewish Federation Security officials work closely with NPPD PSAs, maintaining contact and support as needed.
- NPPD and SCN are currently working closely on planning a national tabletop exercise in early April 2019, which will be focused on pre-incident and incident information-sharing, response procedures, recovery practices, and business continuity protocols.

Examples of NPPD collaboration with SCN and Jewish Community Centers (JCC):

- Coordination Meeting
 - On 6 March 2018, NPPD conducted a meeting with SCN to serve as an opportunity for CEO Masters to gain a greater understanding of the programs that are available to support security efforts. The Department's Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships, OPE, FEMA Grants, and the Office of Cyber and Infrastructure Analysis also participated. Dialogue centered primarily on past relationships, training and efforts relating to active shooter preparedness and prevention; school safety relating to active shooters was also discussed.
- Response to Threats
 - In 2017, in response to threats against Jewish Community Centers, NPPD Protective Security Advisors, in coordination with SCN, conducted outreach to executive directors of the JCC Association of North America. The executive directors represent more than 150 community-based Jewish federations around the United States that provide educational, cultural, social, recreational, and Jewish identity-building programs. PSAs provided facility vulnerability assessments; and assistance with active shooter preparedness, bombing prevention training and guidance, tabletop exercises, protective measures, guides, and other tools to strengthen security at the JCCs. Additionally, the Office for Bombing Prevention

and the DHS Office of Intelligence and Analysis conducted a webinar with 765 SCN members.

- Active Shooter Preparedness Workshops
 - The NPPD Active Shooter Preparedness Program conducted a number of workshops with the Jewish community, including: the Jewish Community Center of San Francisco in September 2015; Weinstein Jewish Community Center in Richmond, VA in December 2016; Katz Jewish Community Center in Cherry Hill, NJ in February 2017; Greater Miami Jewish Foundation in March 2017; Jewish Community Center of Greater Columbus in March 2017; Greater Miami Jewish Federations Council Chambers, Miami, FL, in April 2017; Greater Miami Jewish Federations Council Chambers, Wilmington, NC, in April 2017; and Camden Interfaith, Camden, NJ, in September 2014. An active shooter discussion, which focused on information sharing and management actions regarding theft, vandalism, and active shooters at a house of worship.
- Exercises
 - The NPPD Exercise Program conducted a number of discussion- and operations-based exercises geared towards JCCs, including:
 - Jewish Federation of Cleveland Full Scale Exercise: Conducted in April 2016, and focused on active shooter incidents within the community. Enhanced preparedness and strengthened interoperability among participating organizations.
 - National Jewish Executive Leadership Tabletop Exercises: Conducted in July 2015, and focused on enhancing the ability of the American Jewish community to coordinate security and incident-response efforts. Enhanced the ability to establish coordinated messaging following an emergent threat with nationwide implications.
 - Greater Boston Multi-Faith Crisis Management Workshop: Conducted in June 2015, and focused on better understanding the threats and concerns facing faith-based communities across Boston. Enhanced information sharing, partnership development, and risk mitigation.
 - Our long-term and close working relationship has led to remarkable work such as the recent DHS approval for the co-branded products that SCN distributed to the Jewish community to support security planning for the High Holidays. Other recent successful efforts have included support during the Jewish Community Center threats and during a range of international events with potential risk exposure for the US Jewish Community.
 - We are currently working closely on planning for a tabletop exercise in early April 2019, which will be focused on pre-incident and incident-information sharing, response procedures, recovery practices, and business continuity protocols. In this dynamic threat environment, it is imperative that the Department and its strongest partners, such as SCN, continue collaborating on vital initiatives such as this exercise to more effectively secure our communities and implement the necessary measures to mitigate the impacts of a potential attack.
- Protective Security Advisors
 - Protective Security Advisors (PSAs) maintain consistent reach out to the executive directors of the Jewish Community Center (JCC) Association of North America. The executive directors represent more than 150 community-based Jewish federations around the United States, which provide educational, cultural, social, recreational, and Jewish identity-building programs.
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- Additional resources available: www.fema.gov/faith-resources